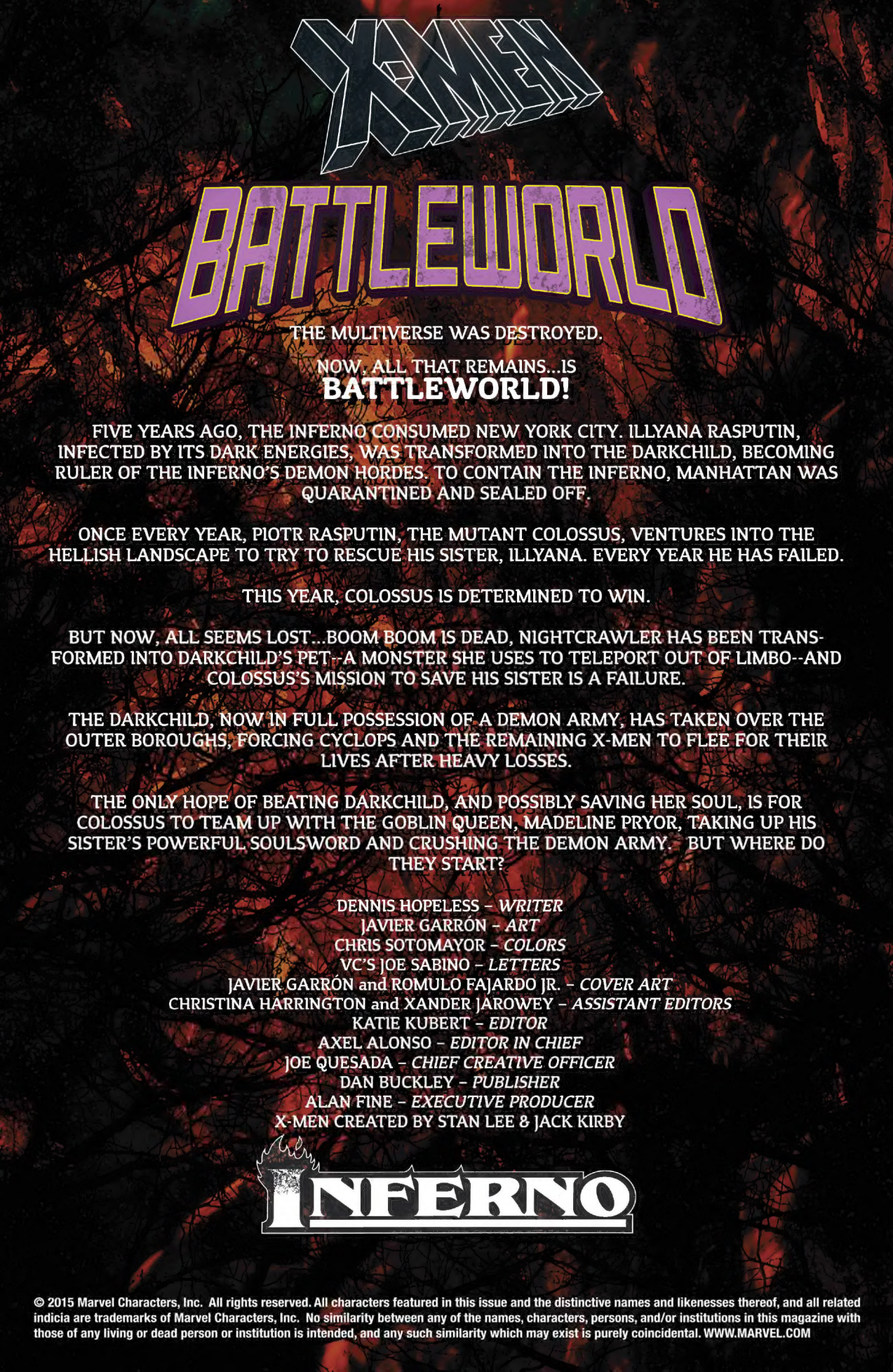
INFERNO
MARVEL
004
HOPELESS
GARRÓN
SOTOMAYOR
SECRET WARS



THE MULTIVERSE WAS DESTROYED.

NOW, ALL THAT REMAINS...IS
BATTLEWORLD!

FIVE YEARS AGO, THE INFERNO CONSUMED NEW YORK CITY. ILLYANA RASPUTIN, INFECTED BY ITS DARK ENERGIES, WAS TRANSFORMED INTO THE DARKCHILD, BECOMING RULER OF THE INFERNO'S DEMON HORDES. TO CONTAIN THE INFERNO, MANHATTAN WAS QUARANTINED AND SEALED OFF.

ONCE EVERY YEAR, PIOTR RASPUTIN, THE MUTANT COLOSSUS, VENTURES INTO THE HELLISH LANDSCAPE TO TRY TO RESCUE HIS SISTER, ILLYANA. EVERY YEAR HE HAS FAILED.

THIS YEAR, COLOSSUS IS DETERMINED TO WIN.

BUT NOW, ALL SEEMS LOST...BOOM BOOM IS DEAD, NIGHTCRAWLER HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO DARKCHILD'S PET--A MONSTER SHE USES TO TELEPORT OUT OF LIMBO--AND COLOSSUS'S MISSION TO SAVE HIS SISTER IS A FAILURE.

THE DARKCHILD, NOW IN FULL POSSESSION OF A DEMON ARMY, HAS TAKEN OVER THE OUTER BOROUGHS, FORCING CYCLOPS AND THE REMAINING X-MEN TO FLEE FOR THEIR LIVES AFTER HEAVY LOSSES.

THE ONLY HOPE OF BEATING DARKCHILD, AND POSSIBLY SAVING HER SOUL, IS FOR COLOSSUS TO TEAM UP WITH THE GOBLIN QUEEN, MADELINE PRYOR, TAKING UP HIS SISTER'S POWERFUL SOULSWORD AND CRUSHING THE DEMON ARMY. BUT WHERE DO THEY START?

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ILLYANA WAS ALWAYS SO SMALL.
AND YET, AFRAID OF NOTHING.
SHE HAD HER BIG BROTHER TO KEEP HER SAFE.
THAT WAS MY JOB. MY ONLY JOB.
AND I COULDN'T DO IT.
ALL THESE YEARS SPENT CRAWLING THROUGH HELL TRYING TO MAKE IT RIGHT.
FIGHTING TO BRING MY SISTER HOME SAFELY.
I UNDERSTOOD THE TERRIBLE ODDS. I KNEW THAT I MIGHT DIE TRYING.
BUT IT NEVER ONCE OCCURRED TO ME TO WORRY--
X LIMBO. NOW.
--ABOUT KEEPING MY HOME--
ABANDON ALL HOPE
NO EXIT

--SAFE FROM MY SISTER.
CAN YOU FEEL IT, BAMFY?
THAT CRACKLE OF ENERGY IN THE AIR LIKE THE SKY MIGHT SPLIT OPEN AT ANY MOMENT?
MY POWER IS GROWING. MY INFLUENCE EXPANDING.
THERE IS NO WAR HERE.
MY DEMON HORDE IS NOT SIMPLY TAKING THE OUTER BOROUGHS BY FORCE...
NO LIVING 5:00 AM TO 5:00 PM
SALVILUCRE
FROZEN YOGURT ART GALLERY
RAAWR!
...WE'VE SWALLOWED THEM WHOLE.
HRRRGH...
MOVE IT OR LOSE IT, CREAMS!
HA!
SMOOSH
PEOPLE HAVE A LOT TO SAY ABOUT DEMONS.
THEY CALL US SADISTIC ABOMINATIONS WHO DELIGHT IN SUFFERING.
OR SOULLESS INHUMAN GHOULS.
EVIL MADE FLESH.
AND THEY ARE OBVIOUSLY CORRECT, BUT...
...MMM, STRAWBERRY.

...AT LEAST WE KNOW HOW TO HAVE A GOOD TIME.
THERE SHE IS. ILLYANA RASPUTIN-- DARKCHILD.
BARBER SHOP
WHOA!
WHO ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO BE, PEACHES?
SOME KIND OF-- HURRKK
I'M LONGSHOT. NOT THAT YOU'LL LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO TELL ANYONE.
SNNF SNNF
THAT'S A RISKY PLACE TO POP A SQUAT, PALLY.
I TAKE IT YOU'RE FEELING LUCKY?
ALWAYS.
HEH. LOOK. AT. THIS.

I WONDERED HOW LONG IT WOULD TAKE FOR THE LAW TO SHOW UP.
ILLYANA RASPUTIN. DARKCHILD, IF YOU PREFER.
MY NAME IS STEPHEN STRANGE. I AM SHERIFF OF AGAMOTTO AND THE RIGHT HAND OF DOOM.
OH, I KNOW.
I ASSUME YOU'VE COME TO TAKE MY TOYS AWAY?
ON THE CONTRARY. GOD DOOM PREFERS NOT TO INVOLVE HIMSELF IN THE DAY-TO-DAY CONFLICTS OF HIS DOMAINS. BARONS ARE EXPECTED TO KEEP THEIR OWN PEACE.
BARON SUMMERS SEEMS TO HAVE FAILED THE DOMAIN OF LIMBO.
I'VE COME TO OFFER YOU HIS JOB.
HAHAHAHA!
ACCEPTED.
OH...
...THAT'S NOT GOOD AT ALL.

MEANWHILE...
SCOTT, WHAT ARE YOU DOING DOWN THERE?
THIS WORLD IS NO LONGER YOURS!
PLANNING.
PLANNING FOR WHAT, EXACTLY?
I DON'T KNOW YET, JEAN.
OKAY, WELL...
...YOU'VE BEEN STARING INTO THAT DARKNESS FOR TWO DAYS.
I'M SURE YOU'RE LOOKING FOR ANOTHER WAY, SWEETHEART, BUT IF THERE WERE ONE--
YOU STILL WANT US TO RETREAT?
NO. RETREAT IMPLIES THERE'S STILL A WAR GOING ON. I'M TALKING ABOUT ESCAPE.
THINK UGLY THOUGHTS AT ME ALL YOU WANT, SCOTT.
WE EITHER TAKE OUR SURVIVORS AND GO, OR WE BURN WITH EVERYTHING ELSE.
I CAN'T JUST ABANDON MY POST, JEAN. I AM THE DOOM-CHOSEN BARON OF THIS DOMAIN.
UM, ACTUALLY...
...I HATE TO SAY IT, BOSS, BUT I THINK YOU'VE BEEN UNSEATED. THE SHERIFF JUST DROPPED IN ON DARKCHILD. YOU'RE OUT. SHE'S IN.
BAD NEWS ALL AROUND UP THERE. BROOKLYN IS EVEN WORSE THAN QUEENS. THE BOROUGHS ARE TURNING FAST. IF WE'RE GOING, WE NEED TO GO NOW.
LONGSHOT IS RIGHT, SCOTT. IT'S TIME.
NO!
SLAM

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!
THIS DOOM-FORSAKEN HELL BEAST TOOK MANHATTAN. SHE TOOK ILLYANA.
SHE'S TAKEN ANYTHING SHE COULD WRAP HER CLAWS AROUND FOR FIVE YEARS!
AND WE JUST LET HER KEEP IT.
WE CONVINCED OURSELVES A WAR WITH HELL DIDN'T MAKE SENSE.
THERE WAS A CITY TO PROTECT. IT WAS TOO DAMNED RISKY.
WE SAT ON OUR HANDS LIKE FOOLISH COWARDS--
--AND NOW SHE'S COME BACK TO TAKE EVERYTHING.
SO, WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE US?
WHAT'S NEXT FOR A PACK OF HOMELESS MUTANTS HIDING IN A SUBWAY TUNNEL, LICKING OUR WOUNDS?
JEAN SAYS IT'S TIME TO RUN.
AGAIN.
TIME TO LET THE DARKCHILD KEEP WHAT SHE'S STOLEN.
AGAIN.
BUT ME, I'M DONE RUNNING FROM THIS FIGHT.
I SAY IT'S TIME TO SHOW THESE DEMONS WHAT THE X-MEN CAN DO WHEN WE HAVE NOTHING LEFT TO--

SAMF
RAWWRRLL!
--LOSE!
HSSSSSS
KURT, NO! STOP THIS!
SAMF
KURT?
WHERE DID HE GO?
I DON'T KNOW, BUT I'VE GOT TWENTY BUCKS THAT SAYS--
SAMF
--HE'LL BE COMING RIGHT BACK.
SOMEBODY PAY THE MAN!

ELSEWHERE IN LIMBO...
THAT WAS THE LAST. WE ARE DONE HERE.
SHLURK
LET'S GO.
I DUNNO, BABE. MAYBE WE SHOULD TAKE TEN, CATCH OUR BREATH AND REGROUP.
NO. WE HAVE TO KEEP MOVING FORWARD. ILLYANA'S POWER GROWS BY THE MINUTE.
WE'RE TALKING FIVE BATTLES IN SEVEN BLOCKS.
BRING ON NUMBER SIX!
I KNOW YOU DON'T LIKE STANDING STILL, PETE, BUT WE NEED A PLAN OF ATTACK HERE.
WE HAVE A PLAN, DOMINO.
STOP MY SISTER BEFORE SHE BURNS DOWN THE ENTIRE CITY.
DON'T YOU MEAN SAVE YOUR SISTER?
THAT'S ANOTHER TWO DOZEN GOBLINS LOST, MY QUEEN. BRINGS THE LIVING HORDE DOWN TO A PALTRY DOZEN.
IF WE KEEP UP LIKE THIS, WE'LL BE OUT OF GOBLINS BY NIGHTFALL.
FIRST THINGS FIRST.
THAT'S WHAT GOBLINS ARE FOR, SYM.
THEY DIE IN BATTLE. THEY RESPAWN A FEW DAYS LATER. WASH, RINSE, REPEAT.
BRILLIANT DEDUCTION, PRINCE BACKRUB.

WATCH IT, HELLSPAWN.
COLOSSUS'S BATTLE STRATEGY CONSISTS OF LOWERING HIS HEAD AND SMASHING IT INTO THINGS.
THERE'S NO WAY THIS DEATH MARCH WILL LAST A FULL RESPAWN CYCLE. WE SHOULD CUT OUR LOSSES AND HEAD HOME.
WHERE WE'LL DO WHAT EXACTLY?
SIT AROUND WAITING FOR THE BIGGER, BADDER DARKCHILD TO COME SNUFF US OUT?
OR DO YOU SUPPOSE SHE'LL FORGIVE, FORGET AND LEAVE US BE?
I DON'T LIKE THE ODDS ANY MORE THAN YOU DO, SYM--
BUT COLOSSUS AND HIS BIG SWORD REMAIN OUR BEST SHOT AT SURVIVING THIS THING.
IF YOU WANT A PLAN, WE CAN MAKE ONE ON THE ROAD.
GREAT.
IT IS TIME TO--
BOOM
WHAT'S SHAKING, BACONS?

DID YOU GUYS MISS ME OR WHAT?
UGH. A GIRL LIKES TO MAKE AN ENTRANCE...
...BUT NOW I AM STRAIGHT FILTHY!
TABBY!
WHO IS THIS IDIOT?
I DON'T KNOW. ONE OF THE KIDS? I COULD NEVER KEEP THEM ALL STRAIGHT.
FOLLOW ME.
I TAKE IT YOU TRUST THIS OBNOXIOUS CHILD?
WITH MY LIFE.
HMM.
I'LL TELL YA ALL ABOUT IT LATER, FO' SHO'.
THERE'S SOMETHING WE GOTS TO GO DO.
LIKE, NOWSERS.
WHERE DID YOU GO?! I THOUGHT WE LOST YOU.
ALMOST DID.
ILLYANA'S GROSS DOG CLAWED ME UP SOMETHING FIERCE.
BUT I PULLED THROUGH AND... HERE I BE.

JUST UP THIS WAY.
CAN YOU TELL US WHAT HAPPENED TO NIGHTCRAWLER, TABBY?
SORTA. I KNOW YOUR SISTER SNATCHED HIM UP AFTER THEY SLICED ME OPEN. NEVER SAW HIM AGAIN AFTER THAT.
WE THINK SHE TURNED KURT INTO SOME KIND OF MONSTER.
YOU ON THE OTHER HAND SEEM SURPRISINGLY UNSCATHED FROM YOUR BATTLE WITH THE ALL-POWERFUL DARKCHILD.
WHAT?!
I HAD HALF MY GUTS HANGING OUT, LADY.
SOUNDS AWFUL. AND YET HERE YOU STAND, CHIPPER AS YOU PLEASE.
HOW EVER DID YOU PULL THROUGH?
MAYBE THAT'S WHAT I WAS GONNA FRIGGIN' SHOW YOU GUYS, DID YOU THINK OF THAT?
DO YOU WANT ME TO SHOOT HER FOR YOU, MOM?
BRING IT ON, SMALL FRY.
YOU OKAY BACK HERE, SWEETS?
WAIT...
...SHHH... I HEAR...

DEMONS!
SMAAASH
I GUESS WE'RE FIGHTING, THEN.
DAMN YES!
WHAT IS OUR LEVEL OF OBLIGATION HERE?
NONE WHATSOEVER.
MY QUEEN DOES WHAT SHE LIKES.
HA. WELL SPUN, BOYS, BUT THIS TIME I WAS LOOKING FOR THE TRUTH.
LET'S GET THIS OVER WITH.
YES, QUEEN.
SHUNK
KA-ZAK
KURT! LISTEN TO ME!

I KNOW MY FRIEND IS STILL IN THERE, KURT.
RAWWRLLL
I CAN FEEL YOU FIGHTING FOR CONTROL.
JUST COME BACK TO US.
OH FOR DOOM'S SAKE...
YOU DON'T WANT TO DO THIS.
SURE HE DOES.
HATE TO INTRUDE BUT, UH...
WHAT YOU'RE DOING THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE WORKING.
ROOOWRRR...
SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO TAKE A STRONGER HAND WITH THE WILD ONES.
THMMP
KURT! NO! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!
KURT'S DEAD, HONEYBUN.
BUT THIS LITTLE FELLOW...
...HE'S HOUSEBROKEN AND SHOW READY.

WHEN ARE YOU GONNA GIVE IT UP, IRONSIDES?

NEVER!

ASSUMING TODAY IS YOUR VERY BEST DAY, THAT SOULSWORD MIGHT JUST BE ENOUGH TO BEAT ME.

BUT YOUR ***SISTER?*** C'MON NOW. THAT GIRL HAS A ***WHOLE CITY*** FULL OF JUICE.

YOU MIGHT AS WELL FALL ON THAT BLADE HERE AND NOW.

KAZAAAT

DIE!

NARGH!

SHLAAAT

ONE OF US WILL FALL HERE AND NOW, BEAST.

BUT IT WON'T BE ME.

I'M SORRY, SCOTT.

WHAT?

TRULY SORRY. ILLYANA IS...I SHOULD HAVE SEEN IT.

I SHOULD ***NEVER*** HAVE GONE BACK. NOT AFTER LAST YEAR. YOU TOLD ME AND I...

...YOU WERE ***RIGHT*** AND ALL OF THIS... IS BECAUSE OF ME.

SORRY?

I WAS RIGHT?!

I DESERVED THAT.

WAS I *RIGHT* ABOUT YOUR EVIL DEMON SISTER?

WAS I RIGHT ABOUT YOUR *INSANE OBSESSION--*

KA-ZAAK

--THAT GOT INNOCENT MUTANTS *KILLED?!*

YOU'VE MADE YOUR POINT, SCOTT. THAT IS PLENTY.

HELL HAS BROKEN LOOSE!

PEOPLE ARE *BURNING* IN THE STREETS!

ALL BECAUSE YOU COULDN'T MOVE ON AND LEAVE IT ALONE!

AND YOU'RE TELLING ME I WAS *RIGHT?!*

OF *COURSE* I WAS &#@% RIGHT!

AHEM...SORRY TO INTERRUPT, GENTS...

THIS SEEMS LIKE IT MIGHT GO ON FOR A WHILE AND I HAVE PLACES TO BE.
MIND PUTTING A PIN IN IT TO HAVE A QUICK CHAT?
WHAT?
WHO?
WE'LL TAKE THAT AS A YES.
HELLO, X-MEN.
I DON'T THINK WE'VE HAD THE PLEASURE.
THEY CALL ME MISTER SINISTER--
--OR SOMETIMES SIMPLY MASTER.
HELLO, MADDY.
SINISTER?!
ALIVE?!
YOU SAID WE KILLED HIM.
I... I THOUGHT WE DID.

BOSS MAN! YES!
I KNOW HOW HE LOOKS, GUYS, BUT THIS IS THE DUDE.
MISTER SINISTER SAVED MY LIFE, SEWED ME UP AND GREW THIS ARMY OF BOOM CLONES OUT OF THE LEFTOVER PARTS.
I DUNNO WHAT THE PLAN IS YET BUT WE TOTES WANT BOSS MAN ON THE ROSTER.
A FINE ENDORSEMENT, TABITHA, THOUGH JUDGING BY THEIR FACES...
...I DON'T THINK YOUR FRIENDS ARE BUYING IT.
LET'S TRY A DIFFERENT TACTIC.
AM I A MORALLY BANKRUPT SOCIOPATH, WILLING TO PUSH ALL BOUNDARIES OF HUMAN DECENCY AND SUFFERING IN THE NAME OF SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY?
YES.
DID I STEAL YOUR FRIEND'S DNA AND SPLICE IT WITH THAT OF A CLASS THREE SUCCUBUS TO BUILD MY UNSTOPPABLE MUTANT/DEMON-HYBRID CLONE ARMY?
YES, I DID.
DID I REPEATEDLY TINKER WITH YOUNG TABITHA'S BRAIN TO MAKE HER MORE SUBSERVIENT?
OBVIOUSLY.
WAIT... WHAT?

I AM WHAT YOU THINK I AM, A DASTARDLY VILLAIN OF THE HIGHEST ORDER.
UNDER OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES, WE WOULD BE ENEMIES.
ONE DAY PERHAPS WE CAN BE.
BUT NOT TODAY, X-MEN.
TODAY...
...I AM YOUR SAVIOR.
NEXT: IT GETS WORSE. EVERYTHING GETS WORSE!

MINUTEMEN
Blutman